

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SY-05

/061 W

-----112038Z 008867 /44

R 111925Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3689

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 0169

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, JM

SUBJECT: CRIME, REVENGE AND SECURITY

1. THE MONTEGO BAY AREA IS REPORTEDLY DEEPLY TROUBLED IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE ATTACK ON LADY SARAH RUSSELL ROUBANIS AND THE ELDEMIRE FAMILY (SEE KINGSTON 0126). OTHER INCIDENTS INVOLVING PROSPECTIVE FOREIGN INVESTORS HAVE NOW BEEN REPORTED, AND THE PRESIDENT-DESIGNATE OF THE SENATE, CHARLES SINCLAIR, HAS ASKED FOR AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE SEVERAL CRIMINAL INCIDENTS IN MONTEGO BAY, CLAIMING THEY ARE PART OF A PLAN TO DAMAGE THE TOURIST INDUSTRY AND TO DEFLECT POSSIBLE FOREIGN INVESTMENT.

2. WHILE THE MONTEGO BAY SITUATION HAS CAPTURED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION, KINGSTON STILL REMAINS A FORCAL POINT FOR CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. ROBBERY, BURGLERY, ARSON, ASSAULT AND MURDER REMAIN COMMONPLACE, AND CAPTURE ATTENTION ONLY WHEN A PROMINENT NAME IS MENTIONED. ONE SUCH INCIDENT OCCURRED OVER THE LAST WEEKEND.

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ACCORDING TO DOUGLAS VAZ, THE SUCCESSFUL JAMAICAN LABOUR PARTY (JLP) CANDIDATE FOR NORTH CENTRAL ST. ANDREW IN THE DECEMBER 15 PARLIMENTARY ELECTION, THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS FACTORY WHICH WAS DAMAGED BY FIRE ON DECEMBER 21 (SEE KINGSTON 5561/76) WAS COMPLETED BY A SECOND FIRE WHICH WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A THOROUGH LOOTING OF WHATEVER PROPERTY COULD BE

REMOVED. THE AUTHORITIES HAVE DENIED THAT ARSON IS INVOLVED. WHILE THIS MAY BE TRUE, IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT ARSON WAS THE CAUSE AND THAT VAZ IS BEING REQUIRED TO PAY A HIGH PRICE FOR HIS ELECTORAL VICTORY.

3. EVEN IF JAMAICA'S SECURITY SITUATION REMAINS AS UNCERTAIN AS EVER, THE "COMPETENT AUTHORITY" UNDER THE STATE OF EMERGENCY HAS BEGUN TO RELEASE PERSONS HELD IN DETENTION. BY OUR LAST COUNT, THE NUMBER OF THOSE RELEASED WAS 148. HOWEVER, IT IS ALSO NOW CLEAR THAT THE NUMBER OF THOSE HELD HAS RANGED WELL ABOVE WHAT HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN REVEALED PUBLICLY. ACCORDING TO A NEWS ITEM ON JBC-TV ON JANUARY 10, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DETAINEES IS PRESENTLY 404; OF THESE, 221 ARE HELD AT UP PARK CAMP IN KINGSTON AND THE REMAINDER AT OTHER DETENTION CENTERS AROUND THE ISLAND. CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE OFTEN ASSERTED THAT THE NUMBERS HELD WERE "IN THE THOUSANDS", A FIGURE THAT APPEARED BASED ON HYPERBOLE. HOWEVER, AT THE SAME TIME IT SEEMED CLEAR THAT THE NUMBERS WERE SIGNIFICANTLY ABOVE THE 200-230 RANGE PUBLICLY MENTIONED. THE REVELATION THAT THE NUMBER OF DETAINEES REACHED AT LEAST 552--OVER 300 MORE THAN ANNOUNCED EARLIER--GIVES CREDENCE TO THE ASSERTIONS THAT THE POWER OF DETENTION HAS BEEN USED MORE BROADLY THAN ADMITTED BY THE GOJ. AND IF THE POWER WAS SO EASILY

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USED IN THE PAST, WE ASSUME THAT IT CAN, AT THE LEAST, BE USED AS EASILY AGAIN.

GERARD

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## Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld  
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